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Committee on Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations
Hearing on Nuclear Security: Can DOE Meet Physical Facility Security Requirements
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INTRODUCTION

Mister Chairman, members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for this opportunity to address security at the National Nuclear Security Administration' s nuclear weapons research and production facilities as well as the issues raised in the General Accounting Office's report on implementation of the May 2003 Design Basis Threat.

The tightening of security that began with the establishment of NNSA in 2000 and accelerated in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, has resulted in a strong, effective security posture at all nuclear weapons research and production facilities. Today no nuclear weapons, Special Nuclear Material, or classified materials are at risk anywhere within the nuclear weapons complex. We are hard at work to sustain that improvement in the security of the complex over the long term.

Secretary Abraham has made it clear we cannot fulfill our national security mission unless we can guarantee security at our facilities. In recognizing security as essential to our mission, he has directed spending on security take priority over other program spending until we can guarantee that security. This priority is reflected in our Fiscal Year 2005 budget request with its significant growth in security spending as well as in a reprogramming request to be submitted this week. Our safeguards and security budget

has grown from $411 million in Fiscal Year 2001 to $582 million in Fiscal Year 2004 and we have asked for over $707 million next year. That's a 75% increase since 2002. About half of this funding is spent on the protective forces that provide front-line security at NNSA facilities. The number of protective force officers guarding our facilities has increased from 2100 to over 2400 during that same timeframe. Overall security performance as measured by independent reviews has also continued to improve. In the past year, no force-on-force performance testing by the Office of Security and Safety Performance Assurance has found security forces unable to protect the assigned assets on their site.

While I am pleased with the progress we have made, our long-term security must be based on more than guns, gates, and guards. Over the long term, we are committed to harnessing the power of technology to improve security. To leverage this power, Secretary Abraham has committed the Department to two initiatives. The first is commencement of a study of DOE requirements and the technologies available today to meet those requirements. We plan for this study to be completed in time to effect changes in the Fiscal Year 2007 Budget submission. The second initiative will re-establish a robust, active research and development program focused on accelerating the availability of new security related technology to the field.

These complementary efforts are designed to reduce our reliance on costly, aging, maintenance- and labor-intensive physical security systems and replace them with state-of-the-art systems designed to put the assets we protect beyond the reach of even the

most capable adversary. In the Twenty-First Century, America's technological prowess can provide invisible gates, omniscient over-watch, and lethal, accurate response capable of deterring or defeating any adversary. We will move toward that future.

But while we prepare for the future, we must deal with today's threats. All NNSA sites have completed, and I have approved, plans to meet the Design Basis Threat by the end of Fiscal Year 2006. We are working closely with our colleagues in the rest of the Department of Energy to ensure those plans meet the rigorous test of the DBT. To that end, we fully agree with the comments from the Office of Security and Safety Performance Assurance on the need for vulnerability analyses to validate planned security upgrades as well as the need for detailed schedules for achieving implementation milestones. These efforts are now well underway at each site and a detailed schedule for validation and testing is taking shape.

We have a number of initiatives and actions under way that demonstrate our commitment to meeting the DBT by the end of Fiscal Year 2006. Since our DBT requirements were not fully evaluated before the formulation of the Fiscal Year 2004 budget, we analyzed this year's budget to identify $55.4 million for reprogramming to keep DBT implementation requirements on track. That would bring our total budget for this fiscal year to $638 million. We have included another $89.9 million, in addition to the base, for these requirements in our Fiscal Year 2005 budget request and anticipate providing the necessary funding required in Fiscal Year 2006 and beyond.

Our Nuclear Safeguards and Security Programs office is leading a team of security and budget specialists to each site to make sure their budgeting processes captures all security requirements and ensure headquarters and sites are in agreement on priorities and the way forward. A second team of experts has just completed visits to every site to review locks and keys procedures, collect best practices, and make recommendations for improvement. I have been briefed on the results of that review and plan to issue NNSA policy guidance to upgrade existing locks and keys programs. In the long term, I intend to pursue an initiative that will move us toward a "keyless" security environment within the next five to ten years.

We have also used experts from outside the Administration to help improve the effectiveness of security. I have recently received a report from Admiral Hank Chiles on the health and future of the NNSA' Federal security workforce. My staff is in the process of developing an action plan to address the study's findings and recommendations. In very short order, I expect to receive reports from Admiral Rich Mies on the overall effectiveness of NNSA security operations.

These reports will be a central focus of the NNSA Safeguards and Security Summit I will hold in June with the top Federal, laboratory, and plant managers together with their senior security staffs. My plan is to seek their input on how best to implement the recommendations in these reports to enhance security effectiveness and better manage the security career field. This will be the first such summit NNSA has ever held.

Our corporate partners have also reaffirmed their commitment to security. For example, the University of California has established a security oversight board for Lawrence Livermore and Los Alamos National Laboratories. Lockheed Martin, prime management and operations contractor at Sandia, has established a Security Subcommittee of their Board of Directors to ensure appropriate continuing independent focus on Sandia National Laboratories. We have new security chiefs in place at several of our laboratories and plants, and we are beginning to reap the fruit of these changes.

The Administration's efforts to meet the security challenges raised by the 9/11 attacks have been well documented in both the GAO report issued today and in previous testimony before this subcommittee. Accordingly, I will not recount those efforts now except to establish them as the foundation for all subsequent and future measures. The process of enhancing security at NNSA facilities has been an iterative one and each step builds on the previous one and impacts the next in terms of the manpower and resources to proceed.

GAO

The GAO report raised the issue of the effectiveness of elevated Security Conditions or SECONs at NNSA sites. As the report states the SECON at NNSA sites was raised from SECON level "4", or normal, to SECON 2 within hours of the attacks in New York and Virginia. These site-specific SECON measures, generally equivalent to prudent measures taken to protect life and property by American security forces worldwide, are designed to put up the best available defense against a broad spectrum of threats and deter attack by

raising the profile of security forces. Each site's SECON Implementation Plan is reviewed and approved by the NNSA site managers.

The effectiveness of SECON measures is validated through "table top " analysis, limited scope performance testing, alarm response drills and oversight by Federal site staff. Those facilities at greatest risk or with the highest potential of catastrophic consequences continually assess the effectiveness of SECON measures for critical areas and the effectiveness of the site protective force to meet mission assignments. Over the last two and one half years, sites have modified their security measures to reflect changes in threat levels in response to guidance from Headquarters. As I stated earlier, testing on measures to meet the new DBT are underway.

Today, our sites maintain SECON 3 plus additional security measures as a normal state of readiness. During seven periods since 9/11, sites have been directed to elevate SECON levels consistent with Department of Homeland Security setting Homeland Security Condition Orange. As the GAO report indicates, a heightened state of readiness does impact training, effectiveness, and the operation s tempo of the protective force. Additionally, we estimate the cost of SECON 2 averages about $560 thousand per day NNSA wide—most of that in protective force overtime costs.

We also recognize the need to reduce the amount of overtime security force personnel are required to work. We are aggressively hiring required additional security personnel to alleviate this problem in the short term. At our request, the Congress last year provided

us additional flexibility on conducting the necessary background investigations to allow these new officers to be effective. Additionally, the Secretary issued guidance in September of last year requiring the application of technology solutions to security challenges to the extent possible to reduce reliance on protective forces. In cooperation with the Office of Security and Safety Performance Assurance, we have begun a major initiative to employ available new technologies to enhance security and reduce costs. The NNSA Safeguards and Security Engineering Team—a multi-discipline, multi-site group - is an integral part of this process committed to promoting excellence in design, implementation, operations, and integrity of security systems at NNSA sites.

Improvised Nuclear Devices

As indicated by the GAO report, those scenarios where there is a threat of detonation of an Improvised Nuclear Device, or IND, were not necessarily considered the highest category of risk. The reasoning behind our assignment of risk categories was based on the analyses of physics, weapons design, use control, and security professionals working on the DBT and follow-on guidance. Under the graded protection concepts used within the Department, the Office of Security and Safety Performance Assurance, with substantial support from my staff, concluded a complete, assembled, and certified explosive device or weapon deserves the highest protection as it is already configured with Special Nuclear Material and High Explosives in close and correct proximity. In contrast, an adversary's ability to detonate an IND is primarily a Special Nuclear Material control issue. The adversary must achieve the conditions already extant in a weapon by gaining access to materials stored in substantial fixed facilities with protection in depth

and protective forces on site. For this reason, NNSA concurs with the rationale for such a determination.

Any further discussion of this issue should be conducted in closed session.

DBT Implementation

As I stated earlier, I have received and approved DBT Implementation Plans from the NNSA sites and we are tracking progress through quarterly reporting. The Fiscal Year 2005 budget submission includes specific DBT funding and I expect the Fiscal Year 2006 budget will be strongly influenced by DBT requirements.With planned FY 2004 reprogramming, Pantex and the Office of Secure Transportation will be prepared to meet the new DBT in 2004.. I can assure the members of the sub-committee all sites will be in compliance with the DBT by the end of Fiscal Year 2006 using a combination of fixed improvements and compensatory measures.

In fact, many of the basic improvements to physical security required for DBT implementation have been accomplished or are well under way. Some facilities have already been hardened. Critical material has been consolidated and the frequency of patrols around retained materials and critical facilities has been increased. Vehicle parking and movement has been controlled to increase the standoff distances around facilities for protection from vehicle bombs. Vehicle searches, including canine searches for bomb detection, have been stepped up. Temporary vehicle barrier systems have been put in place and construction of permanent barrier systems has begun.

We have not just increased the number of protective force personnel; we are continually improving their capabilities to defend against determined attack. Security positions are being hardened against blast and heavy weapons. To deny an adversary cover, lighting has been improved and fields of fire cleared around perimeters and critical facilities. Protective forces are being equipped with thermal imaging and night vision devices to further enhance their ability to detect and engage any adversary. And, when and if they must engage, protective forces will be using upgraded weapons and munitions with increased range, accuracy, and lethality.

Y-12

I know that security at the Y-12 facilities at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, is of particular concern to this Subcommittee. These facilities do represent some of the most difficult security problems we face in some parts of the complex—aging, outdated facilities built in the early days of the Cold War-- or earlier- when no threat of the current nature was envisioned. The long list of compensatory measures, capital improvements, and security upgrades identified by Site Office management to ensure Y-12 can meet the DBT clearly indicates the magnitude of the effort.

I am, nonetheless, convinced Y-12 will meet the deadline for implementation. Much of the funding for security upgrades since 9/11 has been used for interim improvements at Y-12. In addition to the $82 million appropriated for Y-12 this year, $7.5 million in headquarters funding was allocated to Y-12 and nearly half the $55.4 million in our

reprogramming request is earmarked for Y-12. The overall NNSA Fiscal Year 2005 security budget contains a request for $89.9 million for DBT implementation requirements and approximately $25 million of that is earmarked for Y-12. An appropriate percentage of the Fiscal Year 2006 funding will also go to Y-12.

This level of effort and funding has led some to question the long-term viability of Y-12 as an appropriate site for this mission. Secretary Abraham has committed to conducting a review of the entire weapons complex, based on the anticipated revised stockpile plan now under preparation and the new Design Basis Threat. We are committed to a complete review looking at all options. It is clear, however, that moving Y-12 would be a lengthy, expensive endeavor that would impact the mission for at least a decade and would costs billions of dollars. During that time period, security at Y-12 would have to meet the same standard we are striving to achieve by the end of Fiscal Year 2006. For this reason, I do not believe moving Y-12 is a solution to our near term problems.

We are doing more at Y-12 than just spending money. All our management and expertise are appropriately focused on Y-12's security issues. I have asked the Chief of Defense Nuclear Security to focus the majority of his time and attention to ensuring Y-12 stays on schedule to meet the implementation deadline.

Materials Consolidation

Consolidating and securing special nuclear materials is a major part of our overall security strategy. We are already well underway on our plan to begin to move Special

Nuclear Material from TA-18 to the Device Assembly Facility in Nevada as early as this calendar year and well ahead of the schedule. It has been a lengthy process and it's not over yet, but we have learned many lessons. To capitalize on those lessons, and under the banner of the Secretary's Management Challenges, my staff -- teaming with colleagues in Acting Undersecretary Garman's organization- is working to identify and prioritize other material consolidation candidates and develop a road map for streamlining the process for future consolidation efforts. Consolidation is important within sites as well as between sites. For example, the Highly Enriched Uranium Material Facility (HEUMF) at Y-12 will allow us to consolidate materials within the site and reduce the defended footprint.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that consolidation is not a panacea. Material must be at some locations in order to carry out our mission. Thus, for example, although the Subcommittee has heard suggestions to eliminate special nuclear material at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, our judgment is that such a step would preclude our carrying out important Stockpile Stewardship assessments.

Conclusion

We at NNSA are fully committed to maintaining the security of the national treasures we guard. Implementing the new DBT is a big part of that job. With your support, we can continue our excellent track record, fix our problems, and ensure the long-term security of the nuclear weapons complex. Thank you for your attention. I look forward to your questions.